



June 2007

Message from the Commissioner

Welcome to the first issue of ORC Racing News. One of our main goals at ORC is to make sure you have the information you need to know about racing here in Michigan. Our staff sat down and brainstormed many ways we could reach out to you. Needless to say, some of those ideas we tossed out pretty quickly. However, one of the best we came up with was to create an e-newsletter every other month. By emailing it, we can reach the most people, most efficiently. If you have received this through someone other than us, we appreciate the network of sharing. But, if you would like to receive it directly from us, please send Liana a note at bennettL@michigan.gov. She will add your name to our distribution list.

Our office, like the tracks are a buzz with activity. We have some rule changes we are reviewing, promotions we are planning and licensing systems process we are evaluating. Although this is all happening, please remember, we always have time to hear from you.

45 Day Rule Change

One of the ORC General Rules has been amended and changes from 30 days to 45 days the current racing eligibility requirement for Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses to have started, or been charted, to be eligible to race. We believe this change will benefit the industry by allowing more horses to qualify and help fill races.

Uncoupling Rule Change

Another rule change is the uncoupling rule. This rule defines mutuel entries and the conditions for coupling or uncoupling of horses for such entries. The new rules revise the current definition of "Mutuel Entry" which requires that 2 or more horses in a race that are either owned wholly or partly by the same owner(s) or are trained by the same trainer must be coupled together as a single betting interest in that race. The new rules would either eliminate or make optional the requirements for coupling of same trainers in the definition of "Mutuel Entry," the pertinent rules for Thoroughbred and Standardbred racing breeds and the rules for wagers that prohibit uncoupling as a condition of the wager being offered. Both of these rules became effective in May.

Annual Report

The 2006 ORC Annual Report has been submitted to the Governor and is available on our website. The Michigan licensed horse race tracks presented a combined 1,909 days of live and simulcast pari-mutuel racing during 2006. These six tracks attracted over 1.1 million fans who wagered \$281.2 million and generated over \$9 million in state tax revenue. Although the horse racing industry is seeing a decline in attendance and wagering, the enthusiasm of the horsemen remains high. The ORC has begun to work with the individual tracks to increase promotion of the sport through various avenues.

Michigan Horse Racing Month

Michigan has become the first state to recognize its horse racing industry with an entire month of celebrations. June has been declared "Michigan Horse Racing Month" with a resolutions from Governor Granholm, the State Senate, the House of Representatives and the Agriculture Commission. Along with these honors, ORC has launched its new website, distributed its first edition of ORC Racing News, created an official poster and contacted numerous media outlets. Several of the tracks have had promotional activities using the theme. The Michigan horse racing industry includes over 26,000 from breeders, trainers, grooms, jockeys, drivers, track personnel, association members and the like. We just felt it was time to say thank you for all that you do to continue the tradition of horse racing in Michigan.

New Website

ORC has a new look on the internet. Our address is the same but we have made additional information available. The site contains all the forms you need to be licensed. Just download and fill them out before you come to our office. It also has news from our veterinarians and updates to any rule changes. Check back often for newly posted items.

www.michigan.gov/horseracing

Profile of a Steward

Daryl Parker knows and loves horseracing. For the past 42 years, Daryl has been working in the horse racing industry between Kentucky, Ohio, and Illinois. For the past three seasons he has served in the role of State Steward at Great Lakes Downs in Muskegon. At the age of 14, Daryl was a licensed exercise rider and has worked his way up through the industry from the barns to being the first African American steward in the United State. During the mid-1970s, Daryl moved up to racing official status by becoming an assistant racing secretary and eventually clerk of scales and paddock judge. In 1986, Daryl received his flat racing certification at the Thistledown Raceway in Ohio. He remains the sole African American to hold a permanent position as steward in the nation.



“Horse racing is the greatest game on earth. It is a fair game and a fair business.”

On his days off, Daryl travels back home to Cincinnati where he spends time with his wife Cynthia and cuts the grass. Horseracing has become a family tradition. Daryl's son, Deshawn L. Parker, has been a jockey for over 20 years, won his 2000th race in 2005 and is one of the top African American jockeys today. He races at Mountaineer in West Virginia. Both father and son have received several honorable recognitions for their contributions and achievements in the horse racing industry. They were celebrated at the Kentucky Derby, in their home state of Ohio, and are honorary citizens of Maryland.

Daryl now works between Beulah Park in Ohio, Great Lakes Downs and Mount Pleasant Meadows. As much as Daryl loves horses, he says it is the variety of people that he gets to work with that makes it interesting.

The ORC is proud to have Daryl Parker on our team and for him to be a part of the great tradition of Michigan horse racing.

Pictures

We are always looking for great photos to use on our website or in our publications. If you have taken some fantastic shots of you, your horse or a race and would like to share them, please send electronic copies to Liana Bennett at bennettL@michigan.gov

Michigan Horse Racing Hotline

Michigan pari-mutuel race tracks enforce safety and integrity.

If you know of any illegal activity related to pari-mutuel horse racing
REPORT IT.

The 24-hour hotline is free and confidential.

1-800-973-5000

ORC Contact Information

Main Office

Lansing, MI (517) 335-1420

Great Lakes Downs

Muskegon, MI (231) 798-9052

Mt. Pleasant Meadows

Mt. Pleasant, MI (989) 772-7785

Hazel Park Harness Raceway

Hazel Park, MI (313) 564-5397

Jackson Harness Raceway

Jackson, MI (517) 780-0613

Northville Downs

Northville, MI (248) 349-5458

Sports Creek Raceway

Swartz Creek, MI (810) 635-4562